A

# SERMON.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

ON

# THE DUTIES

OF

# COMPASSION AND BENEVOLENCE.

A

# SERMON.

BY

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Exeter.

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## *TEXT.*

In the eleventh Chapter of the Gospel by St. *John*, — and at the 35th Verse, these Words are written:

*JESUS WEPT!*

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# SERMON.

IN the life of our Blessed Redeemer there is not any incident recorded, which was not intended for *our* instruction, or example: — and among the many wonderful events, which marked his progress through this vale of tears, — there is not perhaps a more beautifully affecting passage, than that, from which I have selected the words of my text. — Of his almighty power, and his unbounded benevolence in the exertion of it,

it, numberless instances occur! His humility, — his wisdom, — his infinite compassion for the human race, whose nature he had assumed, — his meekness, — his charity, — his resignation to the will of his father, — his fervent zeal for the glory of God, and his divine love, and mercy towards fallen man, — are eminently displayed in every page of the holy Evangelists! — While we read them, continual subject of astonishment, and reverence, — admiration, and gratitude, — love and adoration, — is presented to our MINDS! But by no action upon record, are our affections more forcibly drawn towards him, — or our hearts warmed with livelier emotions of love, and tenderness, — "unmixed with more awful impressions," — than by the exquisitely amiable exhibition

tion of compassionate sensibility, — in the passage before us!

The truly pathetic narrative, from which the words of my text are selected, will be found at large in St. John's gospel. — The circumstances were briefly these: —

LAZARUS, the beloved friend of JESUS, was sick. And his sisters sent unto the Lord, saying, "LORD, HE whom "thou lovest, is sick!" —

Notwithstanding this short, but affecting intimation, our Saviour continued two days longer in the place, where he then was; — not from indifference to the fate of his friend, — as is evident from the sequel; — but — as himself expressly

pressly declares, — "For the glory of "God, — that the son of God might "be glorified thereby." — After this interval he departed for Bethany, the town, in which the sisters of LAZARUS resided, of whose death he had pre-informed his disciples. — And as he approached, Martha and Mary — the sisters of the deceased, successively meeting him, — addressed to him this mournful, but indirect reproof — for his delay, — "LORD, if thou hadst been here, my "brother had not died." — Our merciful Redeemer, — respecting their sorrows, which alone had extorted from them this expostulatory expression, — made no reply to it: But confirming their faith by the assurance of his almighty power; and expressing his sympathy in their afflictions by sighs, and groans, — He

advanced

advanced towards the tomb, in which Lazarus was deposited, attended by the weeping sisters, and a multitude of JEWS, who had come to condole with them on this melancholy event. — And as he approached the spot, where his friend was interred, the sacred historian informs us, —

"JESUS WEPT!"

The remainder of the story, with the miraculous restoration of Lazarus from death to life, I need not repeat; as these are circumstances well known, and irrelevant to my present purpose; — which is, — "from this example of our blessed "Saviour, to recommend to your imita-"tion, the exercise of all the softer "virtues

" virtues of humanity;" — but more particularly, — " of compassion for the af-
" flictions, and sympathy in the sorrows
" of your suffering brethren!"

" LAZARUS died, and JESUS wept!"

In the wonderful, and sublime display of his power, by which he restored health to the sick, — sight to the blind, — or life to the dead, — our Saviour's actions are not imitable by human weakness. — His piety, his resignation, his patience, his purity of mind, and body, his merciful, and compassionate disposition, — *these* are the virtues, which must form our resemblance to him; — *these*, the excellencies, which must assimilate, and ally our nature to the divinity; — and in which

which we must aspire to emulate, though at an humble distance,—"*the Son of* "*GOD!*"

The human heart cannot be animated by a more endearing, or amiable sentiment, than that of compassion. If we possess not,—as our Lord did,—the power to *relieve*,—we can at least *commiserate*. If we be unable with him,—

"From every eye to wipe off every tear;"

We can at least preserve in our hearts "the milk of humanity;" which inclines us to "weep with those, that do weep!"

But that none of my hearers may form an erroneous idea "of that hu-

"mane

"mane and compassionate disposition," which it is my aim to recommend, and encourage; it may not be improper to draw the line between *affected*, and *genuine* sensibility; — the former of which is as ridiculous, and despicable, as the latter is praiseworthy, and indicative of a generous, and exalted mind. The *young*, and *vain* are too commonly misled into the former by the prevailing, but dangerous avidity of the present age, for that frivolous and seductive species of composition, — *novels*, and *romances*. In these, which are rendered highly pleasing to immature reason, by tinsel ornaments, — and scenery, fascinating to the growing passions, — they are taught to weep at unnatural, and imaginary woes; — and even to feel a predilection for vicious, and immoral characters,

characters, because set off with the specious recommendations of a deceptive sensibility, (which they ought rather to despise than imitate) and of a false courage, as brutal as it is criminal, if estimated by the unerring criterion of the gospel. — These pretended votaries of feeling have a ready tear for every *fictitious* representation of distress; — while *real* misery passes scorned, or unheeded by, — because unarrayed in the splendid pomp of woe; — or — the sight of it is sedulously avoided, — "lest "the delicacy of their nerves should "receive too rude a shock!" They will weep at the imaginary, or self-inflicted sufferings of *tragedy*, or *romance;* — but never think of comforting, or relieving the numberless sons, and daughters of affliction in *real* life, who every

every where present to the eye of pitying humanity!

Far different is the conduct of the truly feeling, and compassionate mind. It is not unaffected indeed by the recital of miseries, which have been; — but is more prompt to relieve by every possible exertion, *those*, which at *present* exist; — than vainly to lament over the "*Woes of ages past;*" — and it recoils with disgust, and disdain — from the paltry decorations, under which the "Semblance of sorrow" solicits its regard, and would abstract its attention from the silent, but emphatic claims of miserable reality! — In short the former is but the shadow of the latter; and is of less comparative intrinsic value, — than tinsel to sterling gold, — or than the

the polished pebble to the inestimable productions of Golconda, or Peru!

Nor is the tribute of a tear the only, or the principal claim, our suffering brethren have upon our compassion. JESUS not only *wept* for LAZARUS, but he restored him to life;—and it is our part, not to commiserate only the woes of the unfortunate, but (if blessed by heaven with the power to do so) to soothe, and alleviate them also, by our advice, our comfort, and assistance! *Passive* virtue has indeed its negative merit; but it is no more comparable to *active* humanity, than the life of an hermit to that of an Howard;—a life of harmless indolence, and prayer, to one passed in unceasing services to God and Man, by the exertion of un-

limited and unwearied benevolence! Humane, and compassionate emotions are evidences of internal goodness of heart; but if they be unproductive of congenial actions, — they can at best be compared only to those ever barren mountains, which — containing in their bosoms the most valuable metals, — are utterly unserviceable to man, 'till their hidden treasures be brought to light, and wrought for his use!

An ancient sect of philosophers, which reckoned among its votaries some of the wisest, and most virtuous of the heathen moralists, — utterly condemned the indulgence of all the softer passions, as unmanly, and derogatory from the dignity of human nature! They even inculcated a stern, unfeeling apathy, —

and

and a rigid insensibility to all the social affections, and to the endearing claims of domestic, and relative tenderness! Our Redeemer wept over his deceased friend, and lamented the approaching ruin of Jerusalem! — By his example therefore, which is the model of all perfection, he has entirely refuted their unnatural tenets; and has sanctioned the propriety, and even the merit of indulging — on all proper occasions — those tender sensibilities, — which for all wise purposes, are implanted in the human breast! And though at this day, there are those, who miscall a brutal, and stoical indifference to the woes of others, — a manly and philosophical firmness; — and who affect to pity, and despise the weakness, as they term it, — of the eye, "which glistens with the

"frequent

" frequent tear of sympathy;" — I maintain, " That there is an exquisitely plea-
" sing gratification in the sacred luxury
" of virtuous sorrow, which more than
" compensates its pangs; — and which
" is infinitely preferable to that torpor
" of soul, that excludes alike every lively
" sensation of grief, or of delight."

To encourage the culture of every passion, which can promote the glory of God, and the good of our fellow-creatures, is equally the province of morality, and religion! We call *cruelty*, *inhumanity*, — because nothing is more opposite to the dictates of our reason, when it is unwarped by prejudice, or unblinded by resentment. — Do we not by this profess, " That humanity, which is only
" another name for compassion, is na-
" tural

" tural to man? And that not to prac-
" tise the duties, it implies, — is wilfully
" to resist his innate propensities to vir-
" tue? — But if reason, and nature fail to call forth our sympathy, and our assistance, on behalf of our afflicted fellow-creatures; — if we behold their sorrows without the emotions of pity, and steel our hearts against their sufferings; — we then indeed degrade, and divest ourselves of the dignity of humanity, and reduce ourselves below the level of the brute creation! And I affirm, " That we may more reasonably
" expect the most luxuriant natural
" productions to spring on a rock, —
" than any one real virtue to exist
" in that heart, which is not alive to
" the tender impulse of compassion."

For,

For, "Tears of pity are nature's marks "to know an honest heart by!"

God has distributed, what are termed, "the good things of this world," in very unequal proportions to its various inhabitants: And he has so made the distribution for purposes of the utmost wisdom, and benignity. It is the source of some misery indeed in this transient, and probationary life; but it affords ample scope for the exertion of many virtues, which will lay claim to a blissful immortality in that life, which is to come! Indeed an entire equality of condition among men, in respect to the possession of the gifts of fortune, or of nature, is not only an absurd, and chimerical idea; but is a system absolutely

impracticable

impracticable in the constitution of things, and can be only the wild, and ridiculous theory of pride, and folly!

But to compensate this necessary inequality, and to open an extensive field for the practice of virtue, — GOD has made the RICH, his stewards for the comfort, and relief of the POOR; and the latter he has destined, (according to his denunciation to our first father, "That he should eat his bread in the "sweat of his brow"), to take the laborious part in the various allotments of life; and "to learn and labor truly to "get their own living." — It is by a reciprocation of services, and rewards, that society exists; — and industry, fidelity, and honesty on the one side, and justice, liberality, and benevolence on the

the other, — are the links, which most strongly connect it! To the RICH is given the power of imitating his Maker in his amiable attributes of mercy, compassion, and charity! — To the POOR is presented for his example, and encouragement, under the pressure of necessity, and other temporal evils incident to his state, — the pious, patient, and resigned conduct, and humility of our blessed Savior in *his* condition of humanity, — who chose to be born in a state of poverty; and who was himself "a "man of sorrows, and acquainted with "grief!"

But though the practice of benevolence be more particularly incumbent on those, who are blessed with abundance, it is by no means incompatible with situations

tions comparatively low, — or to be neglected even by the poor towards those, who are still lower, than themselves! — Almost every condition affords some opportunity for exercising "Emotions of "compassion." — The poor widow's mites were even more acceptable, than the rich oblations of the great; and our Savior himself has declared, "That whosoever "giveth a cup of cold water to a disciple, "in the name of a disciple, shall in no "wise lose his reward."

Hence it should appear, "That the "practice of compassion, and benevo-"lence is obligatory on all, towards those, "who labor under more afflicting dis-"pensations;" — and that where we cannot *remove*, we should at least endeavor

deavor to *alleviate*, and console their sorrows, as far as in our power, — by the interposition of our charitable assistance, — tempered by the voice of comfort and resignation!

The favorites of prosperity need not go far in quest of fit objects for the exercise of the virtues of benevolence, and compassion: Nor let them fear, "That the temporary interruption of "their selfish enjoyments by such occu- "pations, will be unrecompensed — by "more than adequate rewards!" The sight of misery is indeed painful to the feeling heart; but the capacity to relieve it affords a god-like gratification, which compensates the transient pang by the lasting, sublime, and unmixed pleasure

of

of virtue, and by the conscious imitation of the divinity in his most amiable attribute!

For the exertion of this power, with which they are entrusted; and for the abuse of which they must strictly account, — "the RICH of this world" are incessantly called upon in the most impressive terms; — and the various scenes of woe, — which every where present in this checquered life, are a direct, and forcible appeal to every heart, — in which the spark of gratitude toward GOD, and humanity toward MAN, — is not extinct; — in which native pity, and benevolence are not choked by those weeds of rankest growth, — "SORDIDNESS and "AVARICE!"

We

We are enjoined, "to love our neighbours as ourselves;" — and "to do unto others, as we would, they should do unto us." When *we* are visited by the afflicting dispensations of providence, — who is there, that does not wish for the balm of consolation, — the soothing voice of compassion, and the active assistance of *genuine* friendship? Let us not content ourselves then, — only to regard the sufferings of others, with a sigh, — and then to turn aside with impatience of disgust from the mournful spectacle: — But let us, like the good Samaritan, — if we have the power, — bind up their wounds, — console their afflictions, — repair the injuries of fortune, — and prove ourselves indeed their neighbours, according to our BLESSED SAVIOR'S definition of the word!

word! So shall we also find mercy from our GOD, in the hour of our consternation, and anguish, and in the day of our distress; (for from the melancholy vicissitudes of fortune no present prosperity can exempt us)—and after our short pilgrimage terminates, and the day of retribution arrives, we shall experience from our sovereign judge *that* mercy, which the best of us will so much need!

"Blessed are the merciful, for they "shall receive mercy!"

In our Savior's representation of the day of judgment, the principal subject of reward is, "*The works of mercy;*" as the neglect of them is made "the "primary source of condemnation!"

MATTHEW

MATTHEW xxiii, 31. — *When the son of man* (said he) *shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him; — then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory!*

32. — *And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats!*

33. — *And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on his left.*

34. — *Then shall the king say unto those on his right hand, — "Come ye "blessed of my father; — inherit the "kingdom prepared for you from the "foundation of the world."*

35. — *For*

35. — " *For I was an hungered, and ye* " *gave me meat, — I was thirsty, and ye* " *gave me drink; — I was a stranger, and* " *ye took me in;*

36. — " *Naked, and ye clothed me; —* " *I was sick, and ye visited me; — I was* " *in prison, and ye came unto me.*"

37. — *Then shall the righteous answer him saying, —* " LORD, — *when saw we* " THEE *an hungered, and fed thee? —* " *or thirsty, and gave thee drink?*"

38. — " *When saw we* THEE *a stran-* " *ger, and took thee in? or naked and* " *clothed thee?*

39. — *Or,* " *When saw we thee sick,* " *or in prison, and came unto thee?*"

40. — *And*

40.—*And the king shall answer and say unto them,* "*Verily I say unto you,* "—*inasmuch as ye have done it unto* "*one of the least of* THESE, *my brethren,* "*ye have done it unto me.*"

41.—*Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand,*—"*Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil, and his Angels:*

42.—*For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:*

43.—*I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison; and ye visited me not!*"

*Then*

44.—*Then shall they also answer him saying,* "*Lord, when saw we thee an* "*hungered, or athirst, or a stranger,* "*or naked, or sick, or in prison; and did* "*not minister unto thee?*

45.—*Then shall he answer them, saying,* "*Verily, I say unto you,—inasmuch* "*as ye did it not to one of the least* "*of* THESE, *ye did it not to* ME."

46.—*And* THESE *shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the* RIGHTEOUS *into Life* ETERNAL!

Surely did not our own feelings prompt us to the exercise of the works of Charity, and Compassion towards our afflicted brethren, the awful denunciation against the omission of them, and the

glorious reward, which awaits our faithful discharge of them, should alarm, and engage our ready, and zealous performance—" of such just, and indispensible DUTIES!"

Perhaps MISERY was never more extensively spread over this globe, we inhabit, than at the present eventful, and momentous crisis;—when war has unfurled his crimson banners over almost every quarter of the earth;—when battles, and carnage ravage, and depopulate whole countries;—and when every vehicle of public information presents a hideous detail of destruction, and devastation to our view, and claims from the eye of humanity, " the unavailing tear." From thousands of families, even in this kingdom, is wrested their principal comfort,

fort, and support,—the parent, brother, or friend;—and widows, and orphans, in almost every village of our land, deplore with fruitless grief, their woful deprivation!—Oh! let us, my christian brethren,—imitate—in regard to these disconsolate mourners, the example of the blessed JESUS at the tomb of LAZARUS! Let us shed the tear of compassion over the fate of those brave warriors, who have thus died in defence of their country, and religion, against the mad attacks of licentiousness, and atheism; and tho' we be unable to restore them to their afflicted relatives, let us at least supply, as much as possible, the loss of them,—by giving to their surviving families *that* support,—which a life, devoted to our, and their country's preservation, was wont to afford them!

This

This is not more a demand on "national munificence," than on the private liberality of every individual!—While we lament, let us also repair,—by every mean in our power, the melancholy effects of war;—let us visit the chearless cottage of the *dead*, or *absent* defenders of our land;—let us clothe, feed, and comfort their naked, and destitute families;—pour the balm of consolation into their anguished bosoms;—and teach the hearts, that are sorrowful, to *rejoice!*

Repair also with me, my friends, in mind,—to the dungeon of the disconsolate captive!* Our laws,—just and salutary

* To remedy the various, and shameful abuses, which obtain throughout this branch of our legal code;

salutary in themselves,—are like all human institutions, frequently defective, or perverted; and by an arbitrary construction of them, "Numbers of de-
"serving characters are lost to their
"families, and society,—immured in a
"prison,—and deprived of Liberty," life's best and dearest prerogative, for failures

code, and to establish a proper discrimination between the unfortunate, and the fraudulent insolvent,—vigorous, and persevering have been the efforts of one of the best and most enlightened men of the present age!—It is true, they have hitherto failed of complete success;—but should they even sustain an ultimate defeat from the base, and interested combination of prejudice and party;—His benevolent exertions in the cause of humanity will ever distinguish the name of "FRANCIS RAWDON HASTINGS, EARL OF MOIRA," (when his military talents may be forgotten) among the most illustrious benefactors of this country, and the human RACE!

lures,—which perhaps depended not on themselves, and which human prudence could neither foresee, nor prevent! Misfortune thus suffers the punishment of wilful guilt; and the severe visitations, with which the Almighty frequently chastises his chosen servants, are aggravated by the cruelty of unfeeling men; —who influenced by no principle,— but self-interest, avarice, or resentment, —"imprison their fellow-servant for "one hundred pence,"—not remembering, "that themselves are indebted to "their Lord, ten thousand talents;"— and "that mercy will be extended to "those only, who have shown mercy to "their *brethren!*"—To such scenes, as these let us sometimes repair; and if we be unable to restore freedom to our captive

tive brother, — let us at least endeavor to render his situation, as tolerable as possible,—by every consolatory effort, by the soothing voice of comfort, and the hand of charitable relief!

The bed of sickness also claims, with equal force, the attentions of *humanity!* How many languish in cheerless poverty, under the added affliction of infirmity, and disease; and pour — unknown, unheeded by the world, — the silent yet bitter tear of sorrow, and anguish, "to the God of the *distressed.*" — Such doubly demand the fostering hand of pity, and plead irresistibly to the feeling heart for that tenderness, care, and commiseration, which alone can mitigate their sufferings, and re-animate their enfeebled frame!

To

To destitute old age, and helpless infancy, it behoves us to extend those comforts, and that relief, which the decline of life, and the tenderness of childhood, movingly solicit. — To the former, we should afford those needful supplies of raiment, and sustenance, which may render their few remaining days, unclouded by care, or want! — To the latter, besides necessary nutriment, and clothing, it is incumbent on us to furnish *that* spiritual food, — that instruction in their moral and religious duties, — which may — in their progress through life, — form them into useful members of society, and faithful servants of the Lord, our God!

Nor are these duties, which chiefly regard the indigent, the only claims upon

upon our humanity,—any more than poverty, sickness, captivity, or the infirmities of age, are the only evils, incident to our condition. Neither riches, nor freedom, nor health, nor youth, nor all of them together, can afford any certain protection from the shafts of misfortune, which assail the human state from various, and unforeseen quarters. — The hearts of those, who possess all these nominal blessings, — may be wrung by severer anguish, than *can* result from any, or all those inflictions, which to the eye of the superficial observer form the darker shades in the complexion of human life. — To say nothing of the painful feelings, which arise from domestic inquietudes, — from ingratitude, and infidelity, — from abu-

sed

sed friendship, or filial disobedience;—do not the death of beloved relatives, and connexions, and the consequent dissolution of the dearest ties of social, or domestic life,—frequently transfix the soul, possessed of sensibility, with pangs more poignantly severe, than any which personal sufferings could inflict upon it?—In such instances, the lenient hand of time, the consolatory voice of friendship, and the comfortable dictates of religion, form the best and surest antidote against the "too great prevalence "of sorrow;"—and on these occasions, we are taught by the example of our Savior in my text, that an indulgence of the soft effusion of tenderness, and sorrowful regret,—is not only allowable, but natural and amiable!

From

From whatever causes the afflictions of our fellow creatures originate, to alleviate them, — as far as we have ability, by every office of kindness and humanity, is the undoubted obligation of every Christian. Even when they have been induced by *folly*, or imprudence, the heart of the truly compassionate will in their *sufferings* forget their *faults;* and hasten to impart that charitable consolation, which *misery*, however occasioned, demands from all, whose conduct is squared by the precepts of the GOSPEL!

There is not perhaps in nature, a more affecting, and sublime spectacle, "than a good man struggling with ad- "versity, with a mind not unmoved, "yet unbroken by its pressure:"—unless

less it be *that* of " the compassionate " son of benevolence," restoring peace, and comfort to his bosom, and dispelling the storms of affliction, by his consolation and assistance. For " it is more blessed to give, than to receive!"

But I must warn you, that in all the exertions of your pity, tenderness, or liberality,—in order to give them sterling merit,—the *action* must be sanctified by the *motive!* If it have not the will of God, and his glory for its object, but proceed from an affectation of generosity, or sensibility,—or even from a natural clemency, or milkiness of disposition, uninfluenced by the superior considerations of God, and religion,—it loses its value in his sight, and lays no claim to his benign regard!—

Our

Our Savior's declaration is, " whosoever " giveth to a disciple, *in the name of a* " *disciple*, shall in no wise lose his re- " ward."—He does not annex the reward to the *action*, but to its motive;—and indeed, unless this be influenced by a regard to God, and our duty,—the most specious virtues are divested " of the greater portion of their merit!"

In our performance of the works of mercy, let us carefully avoid, (as our Saviour enjoins) all appearance of ostentation,—all desire of human praise, or admiration;—lest such empty tribute of applause be our only reward, and our conduct incur *condemnation*, not favor from the " searcher of hearts,"—to whom our most secret springs of action are clearly, and intimately known! But let

let us, in our alms to the needy,—our consolations to the afflicted, our visits to the sick, or the captive,—" let not " our left hand know, what our right " hand doeth;" and so " our father " which seeth in secret, himself shall " reward us openly!"

There is also in the discharge of the duties of benevolence, an anxious delicacy to be observed by the feeling mind towards the unhappy sufferer! Too often do weighty and important benefits lose much of their value—by a cold and ungracious manner of conferring them;—and when they are accompanied " by reproof for misconduct," or oblique reflections on the past follies, or imprudence of the object, they extort only a frigid, and reluctant gratitude,

tude, not untempered by sensations of resentment, and disdain! We had almost as well withhold our succour, as thus detract from its merit!—Our ability to relieve gives no privilege to reprehension; and a great, and generous mind, however depressed by calamity would indignantly spurn at that bounty, which brought with it, *reproach*, instead of *consolation*, and which claimed an insolent superiority for the DONOR, over the victim of *perhaps* "unmerited "MISFORTUNE!"

The performance of the works of mercy is ever accompanied by such inexpressibly delightful, and sublime sensations,—such heavenly, and unmixed pleasures,—that I should imagine, a reflecting mind would need no stimulus

to

to the unwearied practice of them: Since—independently of the eternal reward annexed to them, " the exertion " of compassion, and benevolence does " assuredly form our best and truest " happiness in the present life."—These virtues indeed are attended with an immediate recompence here—in the conscious satisfaction, and peace of mind, which they confer; and they form also " the only solid foundation for future " hope."

Surrounded by all the conveniencies and superfluities of life, seldom do the rich interrupt their pleasures, by reflecting on the indispensible duties of their state;—or by adverting to the complicated miseries, and distress, under which a very large portion of their fellow-

creatures

creatures is continually languishing!—Objects of affliction are carefully repelled from their sight, by the vigilant insolence of their "*pampered hirelings;*" who themselves, basking in the sunshine of plenty, have no sense of compassion for the starving, the naked, and the houseless wanderer; but drive them with insult from the door, and expose them without feeling, or remorse,

"To the rude pelting of the pitiless storm."

The parable of the rich man, and Lazarus holds out an awful warning to these "HIGH AND MIGHTY ONES OF THE "EARTH." The prosperity, and the miseries of this life are equally transitory; but the rewards, and punishments of a future state, are ETERNAL! Yes, after

our mortal existence shall close, and the day of retribution arrives,—the scene will be instantly, and terribly reversed! Then shall the patient children of adversity be carried by angels into Abraham's bosom;—while the ungrateful, and unfeeling sons of prosperity shall be transferred to the mansions of ETERNAL WOE, where shall be wailing, and gnashing of teeth!—And then shall the saying of Abraham be retorted to their complainings;—"remember (it shall be "said) that ye in your life time did re-"ceive your *good* things; and likewise "the poor *evil* things,—but now they "are comforted, and ye are tormented!"

So greatly do riches, and abundance corrupt the human mind, that our Savior's awful, and repeated denunciations

tions against the rich are the less to be wondered at! Prosperity too commonly steels the heart against the tender dictates of compassion;—for few can feelingly commiserate those evils, from which themselves have always enjoyed an exemption!—Yet do not riches necessarily preclude salvation! God forbid! It is the abuse of them only, and the ingratitude to God, and inhumanity to man, which that abuse includes, that incur condemnation! Well-employed, they are a favor, and a blessing from God; and if we apply our talents,—whatever they be, to a right use, we shall at the day of judgment be addressed with that comfortable sentence,—" Well done, thou " good and faithful servant! Enter thou " into the joy of thy Lord!"

In whatever stations providence has placed us, there are few of us,—who have not at some time or other,—opportunities of relieving, or comforting the distresses of the more unfortunate of our brethren. Let us on no account neglect such occasions, whenever they occur;—for the tear of pity, which is given to affliction in this life, shall be rewarded with exceeding great joy, and gladness in the next. It shall rise "as "a grateful memorial before God,"—and be treasured in his bottle! And the food, the raiment, the perishable goods of this world,—which we bestow for God's sake,—on the hungry, the naked, and the indigent, shall be recompensed with unfading treasure in heaven, "where the moth consumeth not, and "the rust eateth not away!"

Let

Let us all then, my brethren, to the extent of our abilities, comfort and relieve the miseries of our afflicted fellow-creatures! Let us cherish with delight each tender impulse of humanity, and compassion, which springs within our hearts, till it bring forth in us abundantly, "the fruits of active benevo-"lence."—

I shall conclude with this beautifully pathetic admonition, selected from an excellent compendium of morality.

"Shut not thine ears, O man! a-"gainst the cries of the poor; neither "harden thine heart against the cala-"mities of the innocent.

"When the fatherless call upon thee; "when the widow's heart is sunk, and "she

" she imploreth thy assistance with tears
" of sorrow;—Oh! pity her affliction,
" and extend thy hand to those, who
" have none to help them!

" When thou seest the naked wan-
" derers of the street, shivering with
" cold, and destitute of habitation;—let
" bounty open thine heart;—let the
" wings of charity shelter them from
" death, that thine own soul may live!

" Whilst the poor man groaneth on
" the bed of sickness;—whilst the un-
" fortunate languish in the horrors of a
" dungeon, or the hoary head of age,
" lifteth up a feeble eye to thee for
" pity;—Oh! how canst thou riot in su-
" perfluous enjoyments, regardless of
" their wants, unfeeling of their woes?"

Now

Now unto the giver of all good, and perfect gifts,—to the God of all consolation, benevolence, and mercy, be glory, and majesty, dominion, and power, both now, and for ever! *Amen.*